



General A. S. Vaidya, Chief of the Army Staff, listening to Lt. Col. T. S. Choudhury, manager of the Army engineers sailing cruise around the world which called on him in New Delhi on Tuesday. The cruise on 37-foot fibre glass yacht—Trishna—started from Gosport (UK) on October 12, 1984, and reached Bombay on February 1, 1985. The second leg of the cruise will be resumed in September.

Sappers to go on world cruise 7 Feb

By Our Sports Reporter

September 1985 will form a landmark in the history of Indian sailing, when the Corps of Engineers of the Indian Army will set out on the second phase of "Sailing cruise around the world".

The six-member crew on the yacht 'Trishna' who set sail from the ports of Gosport in U.K. on October 12, 1984, reached Bombay after 112 days after some memorable experience along the 3500 nautical miles journey.

Popularly known as "The Sappers" the six-member team comprising of Lt. Col. TPS Chowdhury (watch leader), Maj. K.S. Rao (skipper), Maj. A.P. Singh (navigator), Capt. A.K. Singh (watch leader), Lt. S. Shekhar (galley-in-charge) and Lt. C. Bharti (radio officer) had varied experience to narrate of their journey on the 36 feet long Swan class yacht.

All crew members sporting luxurious beards and moustaches, said that they looked forward to the coming cruise round the world, which will stretch from September 1985 to June 1987 - covering something like, 25,000 to 28,000 nautical miles - with confidence.

The teams set sail on a happy note and touched Ports of Alderney two days later on October 14, La Coruna in Spain on October 20, Lisbon on 26, Gibraltar on November 1, Ibiza on Nov. 7, Malta on

Nov. 17, Agios Nikolaos in Kriti Islands, Greece on Nov. 25, Port Said on December 1, Port Sudan on December 15, Aden on Dec. 30, Salalah on Jan. 10, Muscat on Jan. 19 and reached Bombay on February 1 four days ahead of schedule.

The tiny yacht was hit by two severe storms and at least ten gales. In the treacherous Bay of Biscay they experienced a severe storm, with winds over 50 knots, waves 30-40 feet high and very heavy rain causing some damage to their boat. For most of the journey, they had to 'beat' against the winds. At Port Said, Capt. M.S. Pillai, and internationally reputed oarsman took over from Lt. Col. TPS Chowdhury.

The 'Trishna' purchased from the world famous builders, Nautor of Finland, at a cost of 30,000 pounds, despite taking quite a pounding except for minor repairs, was sturdy enough to undertake the remaining two-third of the journey around the world.

Maj. Gen. H.K. Kapoor (retd.) vice president of the organising committee, told newsmen in Pune, on Wednesday, that his boys had quite a story to tell about their journey.

In France the Frenchmen had taken quite a liking for Lt. Col. T.P.S. Chowdhury and wanted him to demonstrate how he could make a turban out of a six yard length cloth. Sailing in almost pitch dark nights was a form of experience, which none of the members of the alert crew would forget.

The entire crew was almost sick, when they touched Isle of Critie. The drinking water had to be fully changed. All throughout the journey the crew could make a strike of fish only once. Dolphins following them for miles together in shoals and flying fish landing up on their decks in the last stretch of journey between Muscat and Bombay provided them with a different kind of experience altogether.